

PTILIUM GYLLENHAL, 1827 AND *PTENIDIUM* ERICHSON,
1845 (INSECTA, COLEOPTERA): PROPOSED CONSERVATION
BY USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS. Z.N.(S.) 2244

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The generic name *Ptilium*, the type genus of the PTILIIDAE, was established by Gyllenhal, 1827: 292, as a subgenus of *Scaphidium*. He included in it four species: *atomarium*, *fasciculare*, *evanescens* and *punctatum*. The first two are nowadays included in the genus *Acrotrichis* Motschulsky, 1848, the other two in the genus *Ptenidium* Erichson, 1845.

2. After Gyllenhal the name *Ptilium* was used by several authors, such as Aubé, 1833; Dejean, 1833; and Villa, 1833. They used it in combination with different specific names. Only when Erichson, 1845, used the name in a revisionary work the usage began to stabilize. Thomson, 1859, designated *Elophorus minutissimus* Gyll. — should be Ljungh — to be type of the genus. This species was not among those originally included, and moreover it has been included in the genus or subgenus *Millidium* Motschulsky, 1855 for a long time.

3. Stephens, 1830: 61, established *Anisarthria* for eight species. Westwood, 1838: 14, designated one of them, *Dermestes melas* Marsham, 1802: 78, to be the type species. This species is currently considered to be a synonym of *Ptenidium pusillum* (Gyllenhal, 1808). Neither *Anisarthria* nor *melas* has been used as a valid name during this entire century.

4. Erichson, 1845: 34, established *Ptenidium*, for five species. Thomson, 1859: 63, designated one of them, *Scaphidium pusillum* Gyllenhal, 1808: 189, as the type species. The name *Ptenidium* has been used in this sense ever since.

5. The genus *Ptilium* Gyllenhal is without a validly designated type species, but it has been used in a uniform way for a century or more. To change it now would only lead to confusion. Therefore I suggest that the Commission use its plenary powers to designate *Ptilium caesum* Erichson, 1845: 26, a nominal species not originally included in *Ptilium*, as the type species. In this way current use can be preserved. Another way could be to suppress all usages of the generic name *Ptilium* prior to that of Erichson, 1845, both for the purposes of priority and homonymy, but I prefer the former solution. Since *Anisarthria* Stephens is an unused senior synonym

of *Ptenidium* Erichson it should be rejected so as to preserve current use. Examples of current use are Sainte-Claire Deville, 1935; Horion, 1949; Hatch, 1957; Lindroth, 1960; Hansen, 1964; Kryzhanovskij, 1965; Brakman, 1966; Besuchet, 1971; Johnson, 1975; and Pope, 1977.

6. Since *Dermestes melas* is a subjective synonym of *Scaphidium pusillum*, the generic name *Anisarthria* is a subjective synonym of *Ptenidium*. In such a case I think the Commission should not totally suppress the unused senior synonyms, but give the junior, commonly used ones nomenclatural precedence.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is therefore requested:

(1) to use its plenary powers:

- (a) to set aside any fixations of type species hitherto made for *Ptilium* Gyllenhal, 1827, and then to designate *Ptilium caesum* Erichson, 1845 as its type species;
- (b) to rule that *Ptenidium* Erichson, 1845, is to be given nomenclatural precedence over *Anisarthria* Stephens, 1830, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
- (c) to rule that *pusillum* Gyllenhal, 1808, as published in the binomen *Scaphidium pusillum*, is to be given nomenclatural precedence over *melas* Marsham, 1802, as published in the binomen *Dermestes melas*, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;

(2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:

- (a) *Ptilium* Gyllenhal, 1827 (gender: neuter), type species, by use of the plenary powers in (1)(a) above, *Ptilium caesum* Erichson, 1845;
- (b) *Ptenidium* Erichson, 1845 (gender: neuter), type species, by subsequent designation by Thomson, 1859, *Scaphidium pusillum* Gyllenhal, 1808, with an endorsement that it is to be given precedence over *Anisarthria* Stephens, 1830, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
- (c) *Anisarthria* Stephens, 1830 (gender: feminine), type species, by subsequent designation by Westwood, 1838, *Dermestes melas* Marsham, 1802, with an endorsement that it is not to be given priority over *Ptenidium* Erichson, 1845, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;

(3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:

- (a) *caesum* Erichson, 1845, as published in the binomen *Ptilium caesum* (specific name of the type species of *Ptilium* Gyllenhal, 1827);
- (b) *pusillum* Gyllenhal, 1808, as published in the binomen *Scaphidium pusillum* (specific name of the type species of *Ptenidium* Erichson, 1845) with an endorsement that it is to be given precedence over *melas* Marsham, 1802, as published in the binomen *Dermestes melas*, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
- (c) *melas* Marsham, 1802, as published in the binomen *Dermestes melas* (specific name of the type species of *Anisarthria* Stephens, 1830), with an endorsement that it is not to have priority over the specific name *pusillum* Gyllenhal, 1808, as published in the binomen *Scaphidium pusillum*, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms.

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